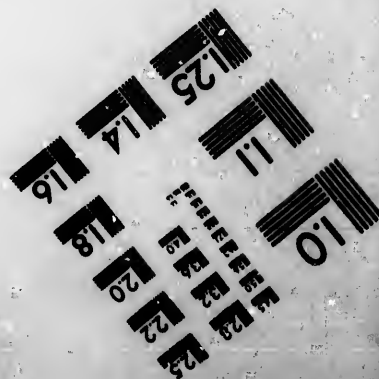
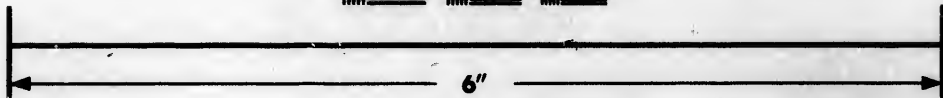
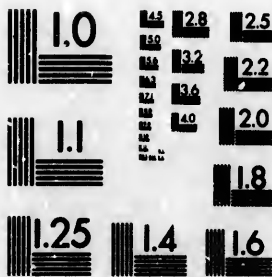


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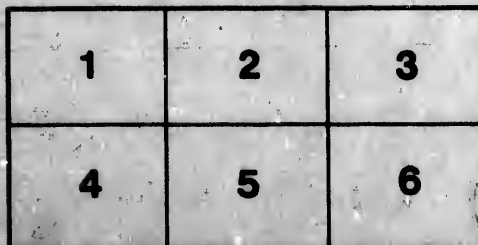
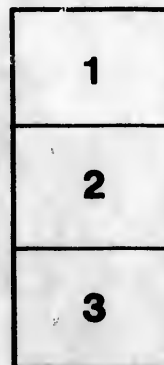
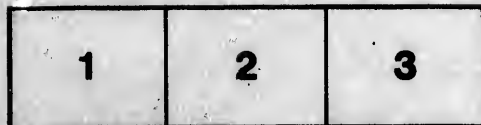
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EMIGRATION.

*William Gladstone Esq M.P.
with Mr. Munn's comments*
S P E E C H

OF

MR. WILLIAM SMITH O'BRIEN, M.P.,

ON MOVING

RESOLUTIONS RELATIVE TO EMIGRATION,

IN THE

House of Commons,

ON TUESDAY, THE 2D OF JUNE, 1840.

LONDON:

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EMIGRATION.

Mr. WILLIAM S. O'BRIEN. — In bringing forward the motion of which I have given notice, I feel that I can advance no claim to the attention of the House, founded upon my own ability to do adequate justice to the subject which I have undertaken to submit for its consideration, but I confidently ask for that attention, on account of the intrinsic importance of the subject itself. It wants, indeed, the stimulating excitement which belongs to party questions, and which never fails to produce a full attendance of Members in this House; but there surely cannot be presented for the deliberation of the representative assembly of an empire possessing such vast colonial dominions as belong to Great Britain, any question more worthy to engage its most anxious consideration than the inquiry whether, by a well-regulated system of colonisation, it may not be in our power at once to relieve the necessities of the population of the mother country, and, at the same time, to extend the resources and promote the aggrandisement of our colonial empire. Every motive which can influence the human mind to honourable endeavour impels us to entertain this question with earnest solicitude. There is no more legitimate kind of national pride than that which exults in viewing our country as the parent of many nations, whose future greatness is destined, hereafter, to bear witness to the wisdom and the energy of the people who founded them. And, whether we consult the impulses of humanity or the dictates of self-interest, we cannot better occupy our time than in considering whether colonisation does not afford us the means of succouring the distressed, and giving bread to the hungry, by an application of the national resources which promises to ourselves a constantly accumulating return.

I shall not, upon this occasion, allow myself, however inviting be the theme, to dwell at large upon those general advantages of colonisation which obviously present themselves to every reflecting

mind. It needs no argument, on my part, to prove that, to a country whose prosperity depends mainly upon commerce, and the motto of whose trading interests is "ships — colonies — commerce," colonisation offers the surest means of securing that prosperity; that, in planting colonies, we employ our shipping, — open markets for the produce of our industry, in which we are met by no jealous rivalry, by no exclusive tariffs, — and are enabled to bring back, from every quarter of the globe, the productions which belong to each peculiar clime. It is sufficient to adduce one fact alone, in illustration of the benefits which result to commerce from colonisation. In 1838, the whole amount of our exports to the great empire of Russia, peopled by a population of between fifty and sixty millions of souls, was only 1,668,243*l.*, whilst, in the same year, the exports of the United Kingdom to our Australian settlements, containing a population not exceeding 150,000 persons, amounted, in value, to 1,336,662*l.* Viewing this subject in reference to another consideration of the utmost importance to the well-being of society, it is necessary for me to do no more than simply to advert to the obvious reflection, — that, inasmuch as popular discontents have, at all times, and among all nations, originated, for the most part, in the physical privations of the mass of the population; in so far as we are enabled, by colonisation, to diminish and mitigate those privations, to such an extent do we obtain a new guarantee for the preservation of peace and order in the community. I cannot, however, refuse myself the satisfaction of contrasting the policy which we, the friends of colonisation, advocate, with that which has too often found acceptance among the rulers of mankind. It is an undoubted fact, attested by history, that statesmen have frequently plunged nations into war solely for the purpose of engaging, in external strife, the active and restless spirits which are to be found in every population, under the fear that, if not thus employed, their

energy would be exercised in exciting intestine commotions. We, on the contrary, tell you, that these very men, superabounding in ardour and energy, become the most hardy adventurers in all colonial enterprise and, instead of encouraging them to inbrue their hands in the blood of their fellow-creatures, we bid them go forth to subdue the forest and the wilderness, and to render the gifts of nature tributary to the use of man. I would invite you, also, to contrast our doctrines with the anti-population mania which, for several years, usurped possession of the public mind in this country;—that philosophical dogma which has sought to annul the mandate of Heaven, —“Be fruitful and multiply,”—given to the early fathers of mankind. We do not ask whether, as a matter of abstract theory, the position laid down by Mr. Malthus and his followers, be or be not true, —“that, whilst population increases in a geometrical ratio, the means of subsistence increase only in an arithmetical ratio,”—but we say, that whilst the unpeopled territories which acknowledge the sway of Great Britain are capable of sustaining twenty-fold the population of the United Kingdom, it is unnecessary to forbid marriage to the young, and, by a cold and often profligate prudence, to defeat the benign intentions of Nature.

Passing from these general observations, I now proceed to the proof of the first position which I have undertaken to establish; namely, —“That, in Great Britain and Ireland, the working classes are frequently exposed to extreme privation, from inability to procure employment.” Now, with respect to England, I am disposed rather to leave it to English Members to state their views with respect to the effect produced upon the condition of the working classes by an excessive supply of labour, as compared with the demand for it, than to dwell upon this part of the case myself, with a view to prove the existence of a redundancy of population in England. My own impression is, that it cannot, with propriety, be said that there is, in England, any very considerable or universal excess of population surpassing the means of employment; but that such excess should rather be characterised as partial, local, and temporary. As an instance of undeniable surplus of labour, in particular employments, I need only refer to the case of the hand-loom weavers, whose destitution has so often attracted the notice and the sympathy of this House. As an example of low wages, occasioned by a redundancy of the labouring population

in particular districts, I would remind the House of the statements which have been repeatedly made, with respect to the remuneration of labour in the counties of Wiltshire and Devonshire, the Members for which counties have been compelled to acknowledge that, in many instances the labourer does not receive more than six or seven shillings a-week as his hire. Of the sufferings occasioned to the working classes in England by occasional want of employment during particular seasons, the manufacturing districts of England afford too frequent illustration; and it is only necessary to mention the towns of Nottingham, Manchester, Bolton, and others, to recal to memory the complaints which we have heard, within a very recent period, respecting the privations of the manufacturing population of England. The simplest mode, however, of viewing this question, in regard to England, is, perhaps, to look at the amount expended on the relief of the poor; and when we find that, even after all the reductions which have been effected under the operation of the Poor Law Amendment Act, the poor rate amounted, in 1838, in England and Wales, to not less than 4,406,907*l.*, we are compelled to conclude that the privations of the working classes must have been, in the aggregate, of fearful extent; since it has been found necessary to raise, by compulsory taxation, so large a sum for their relief. I may here also observe, that, as a considerable proportion of this amount was expended in the relief of the able-bodied poor, whatever portion was so employed may be regarded as a fund which might have been applied to assist the persons so relieved to emigrate, without imposing upon the community any burden beyond that which it has actually sustained in maintaining them in a state of idleness at home. As, however, I wish to avoid the appearance of exaggerating the distresses of the poor, in order to make out a case in favour of emigration, I am contented to rest my argument, with regard to England, upon the simple proposition, — that the labouring classes will not voluntarily abandon their homes, unless, by doing so, they can materially improve their condition; and if, by emigration, they can escape the penury which creates the desire to leave their country, and can obtain comfort and independence in the colonies, we are bound, by every consideration of humanity, to enable them so to improve their condition.

With respect to Scotland, and particularly with respect to the Highland districts, there is, unhappily, no ground for, in any degree, qualifying the statement that the

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population of those districts greatly exceeds the number for whom profitable occupation can be provided. In 1837, the inhabitants of the Western Highlands appear to have been reduced almost to the extremities of famine, from which they were relieved only by the charitable interference of external aid; and from all the most recent accounts which have been brought under my notice, I am induced to believe that they are now exposed to a recurrence of the same calamity. So strong, indeed, are the apprehensions entertained upon this subject, both by the landed proprietors and by the population at large, that there have been several recent meetings for the purpose of urging the Government to promote an extensive system of emigration from the Highlands, as the only resource which can save them from the most appalling destitution. Several petitions of a similar character have also been addressed to this House, from one of which I shall quote a short extract, as descriptive of the present condition of the Highlands, and of the feelings by which that condition is accompanied, in reference to the question of emigration. It proceeds from the town of Portree, in the island of Skye, was presented in April of the present year, and bears 688 signatures. It states, —

That the appalling state of want to which many thousands of the inhabitants of the Highlands and islands of Scotland were reduced in the year 1837, and the misery that has existed in some of the Highland districts since that period, now loudly demand the adoption of an extensive and systematic plan of emigration, as the only means of preventing a recurrence, year after year, of the same degree of frightful distress and suffering.

As it is unnecessary for me to accumulate further evidence upon a point which cannot be disputed, I now turn to Ireland, and am compelled to undertake the painful duty of presenting to the House a picture of the condition of the labouring classes in my own country.

Here, at least, it is impossible to exaggerate. Ireland is, in truth, the country which is chiefly interested in your determination to-night. Now, in asking the representatives of Great Britain to apply their best endeavour to relieve, by emigration, the superabundant and destitute population of Ireland, I will not appeal to those feelings of humanity which induce the English people to seek out objects, in every quarter of the globe, to which they may direct their benevolent exertions for the improvement of mankind; nor will I claim anything from that sense of justice which ought to remind you that almost all the evils under which

Ireland still suffers have been, either remotely or immediately, occasioned by English misgovernment; but I apply myself to the more ignoble motive of self-interest, and suggest the obvious reflection, that unless the condition of the labouring classes in Ireland be elevated to that standard of comfort which is the right of every human being, it will follow, as an unavoidable consequence, that the working population of England must be reduced to the same level of misery and indigence as theirs. It is contrary to every law which regulates the social system to suppose that, in two countries so closely united, there can permanently exist two separate scales by which English and Irish labour shall be differently remunerated.

Evidence respecting the destitution of the working classes in Ireland is scarcely needed. It is to be found in every authentic document which describes the condition of that country. Three years have scarcely elapsed since a parliamentary Commission of Inquiry reported to this House that it might be computed that about 2,385,000 persons, connected with the labouring population, are in distress for thirty weeks in the year, from the want of employment. In the same Report, the Commissioners of Poor Inquiry estimate that, in England, 1,055,982 agricultural labourers create agricultural produce to the value of 150,000,000*l.* per annum, whilst, in Ireland, 1,131,715 produce to the value of only 36,000,000*l.* They also calculate that, as the cultivated land in England may be estimated at 34,250,000 acres, whilst the cultivated land of Ireland is 14,600,000 acres, there are five labourers in Ireland for every two labourers in England engaged in the cultivation of any given quantity of land. If, therefore, there were the same proportion of labourers to land in Ireland as in England, then about 450,000 labourers would be required for its cultivation, whereas, in 1831, there were 1,131,715. These results are so startling, that, I own, I view them with some distrust. But the rate of wages affords an infallible test by which we may measure the redundancy of the population, as compared with the means of employment. Now, I state, with confidence, to the House, as well from my own personal observation as from innumerable sources which cannot be questioned, that the average wages of the Irish labourer, throughout the greater part of that kingdom, do not amount, throughout the year, to 3*s.* per week, — I ought, perhaps, rather to say, to 2*s.* 6*d.* My assertion cannot be contested, when I

state that the industrious labourer, often as estimable in all the moral relations of life as any of his superiors, is frequently compelled to live, with his family, upon a diet of potatoes, without milk, unprovided with such clothing as decency requires, and sheltered in a hovel wholly unfit for the residence of man. If the crop of potatoes which he has sown upon his morsel of conacre ground should fail in any degree, he is reduced to that absolute extremity of want which may be properly designated as starvation. I may state, also, that the unmarried farm servant, whose situation ought to present the most favourable condition of the labourer, living in a farmer's family, receives only one guinea a-quarter, besides his board and lodging. Out of this pittance, he has to provide his clothing. Let me remark, here, that this is about one seventh of the wages which the same individual would receive, with superior accommodation and maintenance, as a farm servant, in Canada. We know, also, that, of late years, a very extensive system of ejection has prevailed in Ireland, — not for the purpose of securing the payment of rent, which is, of course, an incident essential to the maintenance of the right of property, but — in order to effect the consolidation of farms, for the general improvement of the estates. In the great majority of cases, I fear that such ejection has been wholly unaccompanied by any concurrent provision for the ejected cottier. Nothing can be conceived more truly deplorable than the condition of a person so ejected. From having been the occupier of a few acres of land, for which he has often paid his rent with the utmost punctuality, he now becomes a forlorn outcast, unable even to procure employment, still less to regain the occupation of land. Is it surprising that a population in such a state should occasionally be tempted to commit acts of violence? What sympathy can they feel with the possessors of property? What, to them, are the advantages of law and order? Accordingly, we find that they are too often stimulated to do wrong by despair. Hence we hear of land being turned up, in order to induce the farmers to let out a larger quantity of conacre for the growth of provision for the labourer; and we find that an extensive ejection rarely takes place without the accompaniment of outrage. Let it not be supposed that I plead any excuse in this, or justification, for acts of violence; but whilst I cannot withhold my admiration from the patient resignation which renders crime and outrage the exception in Ireland, and restrains the Irish poor, under unparalleled

privations, within the limits of the law, I feel bound to assign the true cause to which occasional disturbances may be traced.

Whilst I witness this suffering among the population who surround me, I take up, year after year, the official Reports which are transmitted from the colonies, and laid before this House, and I find that, at the same moment that our industrious fellow countrymen are starving, at home, from inability to procure employment, a universal complaint pervades our colonies that the bounty of nature is rendered unavailing, from the want of hands to gather the gifts which she there so lavishly bestows. Under these circumstances, I have felt it a solemn duty to call upon Parliament and upon the Government to confer a mutual benefit upon our colonies and upon the mother country, by the transfer of labour, unrewarded at home, to those parts of the empire in which, being so intensely needed, it obtains a more adequate remuneration. In advocating emigration, we seek to befriend, not only those who leave their country, but those, also, who remain; for, in proportion as the excess of labour, which at present prevails at home, is removed, will be the tendency of wages to rise, until they reach that standard below which they ought never to sink. It is difficult to calculate what number must be enabled to emigrate before any sensible effect can be produced upon wages; but I am inclined to believe that the removal of about 100,000 labourers, with their families, from Ireland, would bring up wages to the level of an average payment of 1s. per day throughout the year, — in itself a very moderate pittance, but still a considerable advance upon the present remuneration of labour in Ireland.

In addressing myself to those who are connected with Ireland, if there be any who are insensible to the considerations of humanity involved in this question, I would remind them that, from motives of self-interest alone, they ought to support the system of emigration, which is now proposed as a partial remedy for the distresses of the poor. In a very short time, the Irish Poor Law will be in operation. The able-bodied, when unable to procure employment, will present themselves at the workhouses, and demand relief. Their claim, grounded upon undisputed destitution, will be irresistible; and, until the workhouse is full, they must be admitted. Compare, then, the average cost of maintaining a poor person, in the workhouse, during even an inconsiderable period, with the expense necessary to enable him

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to remove to Canada, and it will be found that, even as a matter of economy, the balance greatly preponderates in favour of emigration. But whether a destitute labourer be sustained in the workhouse or not, this argument leads to the same result. If unemployed, his maintenance imposes a burden upon the community; and, for the most part, upon that portion of the community which is least able to bear it. If, through the want of employment, 500,000 persons are, upon an average, supported, throughout the year, at the expense of others, the lowest amount at which their maintenance can be calculated is 1,500,000*l.* per annum. Now, I am persuaded that half this sum applied annually to emigration would, within a few years, almost wholly extinguish pauperism amongst the labouring population of Ireland. In connection with this view of the subject, it will be remembered by the House that, at the time when the Irish Poor Law was under discussion, all the leading advocates of that measure — all the successive Committees and Commissions which investigated the condition of the Irish poor — recommended that a well-regulated and extensive emigration should be coupled with whatever measures were to be adopted for their relief, as an essential accompaniment. I now call upon the Noble Lord to fulfil the engagement which was then held out, that emigration should be concurrent with and subsidiary to the imposition of a poor rate on Ireland.

Having now, Sir, established, beyond controversy, that a large portion of the industrious population of the United Kingdom are unable to procure adequate employment at home, and that they are frequently exposed thereby to the most cruel privations, I have next to convince the House that, in many of the British colonies, an intense demand exists for an additional supply of labour. I shall, upon this occasion, exclude from consideration those colonies in which the climate precludes Europeans from undertaking continuous labour. The House is aware, indeed, that, in British Guiana, in Trinidad, in Mauritius, and in Jamaica, a very urgent demand for labour has arisen since the abolition of negro slavery; and, in my opinion, it is essential to the prosperity of these colonies, that a supply of free black labourers should be encouraged to immigrate, under such regulations as shall effectually guarantee their liberty, and the improvement of their condition. Without, however, entering, at large, into this subject, I may be permitted to mention an interesting fact which has been brought

under my notice. It seems that the mountainous parts of the Island of Jamaica are not unsuited to the European constitution; and I am informed that, during the last year, the mercantile house of Mitchell took out from Ireland 141 emigrants, to be employed upon their mountain property in that island. It has been stated to me that, hitherto, the experiment promises to be equally advantageous to the emigrants and to their employers; but, though this is a circumstance deserving of notice, on such an occasion as the present, I do not feel that sufficient time has yet elapsed to have tested the success of the experiment, and therefore I am not inclined to found upon it any argument in favour of labour emigration from Great Britain to the West Indies. I therefore apply myself solely to those colonies which, beyond all doubt, open a promising field to the emigrant labourers of the United Kingdom. In beginning with New South Wales, I have experienced no other difficulty than in making a selection from the mass of evidence of unvarying tenor, which is contained in papers laid before this House, tending to prove the intensity of the demand for labour in that colony. I refer, now, to the Emigration Reports laid upon the table during the years 1838, 1839, and 1840. I ought, perhaps, to mention that, during the last three or four years, a Special Committee of the Legislative Council has been appointed to make inquiries with respect to the best mode of conducting immigration into the colony of New South Wales. Their inquiries have been particularly directed to ascertain the additional supply of labour required in different parts of the colony. The extracts which I am now about to quote are taken from the evidence appended to their Report of the year 1838. John Coghill, J. P., says, —

During the last two years, I have found it impossible to procure sufficient labour in any shape. I was offering 7*s.* and 8*s.* a-day for common labourers to no purpose; and, the year before, I was compelled to leave forty or fifty tons of hay on the ground, to spoil, for want of labourers to bring it in.

G. M. Slade, commissioner for the assignment of convicts, in order to show the demand for labour, states, —

I have, at this moment, before me, from 10,000 to 12,000 applications, which, from dearth of means, I have not been able to comply with.

I may here observe, that, as the system of assigning convicts to individuals has been very properly abolished since this Report was sent over, the diminution thus arising in the supply of convicts must

8 HOUSE OF COMMONS. have created a still more active demand for free labourers. W. H. Dutton, J. P., says, —

I am at present compelled, from sheer necessity, to place from 1000 to 1200 sheep under the charge of one man; 500 being the very utmost that a man can properly attend to.

T. Walker says, —

The losses that are at present sustained in every department of business in which labourers are employed, but especially in sheep farming, by actual deaths of sheep, are enormous; and the amount of them, if saved, would cover the expense of wages to this additional number of persons.

A circular letter was sent by the Immigration Committee to eighty-four of the principal employers of labour in different parts of the colony, with the view of ascertaining the demand for labour in the several districts. It is dated August 23. 1838. The first query was, —

Is there still an urgent demand for male and female domestic servants, mechanics, shepherds, and agricultural labourers, in your neighbourhood?

The answer from every one of the persons so addressed, without exception, is, "there is such a demand." The Committee observe, hereupon, in their Report, —

It appears that, among the entire number consulted, there is not a dissentient voice as to the want of additional labourers in every department; and the imperative necessity of introducing an immediate and copious supply, if we would avert the most serious evils, has been urged most forcibly upon the attention of your Committee. . . . The appropriation to this purpose of the entire surplus of the produce arising from the sales and leases of Crown lands, after certain recognised charges have been defrayed, is the object upon which the first degree of solicitude is felt and expressed by the public.

In the subsequent year, Mr. Pinnock, the emigrant agent in New South Wales, writes to the following effect, in a letter, dated February 28. 1839: —

It will be evident that there cannot be a stronger proof of the great demand for labour which exists in this colony, than the fact, that all the emigrants who arrived, during the past year, notwithstanding the numerous disadvantages before adverted to, which they had to contend with, are now comfortably settled, and at high wages, throughout the colony.

The latest official Report which has been laid before the House is that of Mr. Elliot, the agent general for emigration, presented during the present Session, in which he states that, —

At the date of the latest accounts, abundance of rain had fallen, and the crops were looking well. The wages of mechanics and domestic servants continued as high as ever; and agricultural labourers were receiving 25*l.* per annum, with

board and lodging. All the emigrants of 1839 had obtained comfortable employment.

Since this paper was presented, another Report has appeared in the public journals, from the Committee on Immigration in New South Wales, confirming the previous statements as to the increasing demand for labour, and suggesting that a loan should be raised, upon the security of the land fund, for the purpose of procuring the additional supply required.

With regard to the flourishing colony of South Australia, I shall leave to my Honourable Friend the Member for Hull who has the honour of having mainly contributed to its foundation, the satisfaction of describing the condition of the labourer in that colony, and the prospect which it holds out to the industrious emigrant.

In reference to Western Australia, I shall confine myself to a quotation which I have extracted from the Emigration Report, presented to Parliament in the month of August, 1839. It contains a memoir, submitted by Sir James Stirling the Governor, to the Council of Western Australia, in which he says, —

In the present state of the colony, there is such a deficiency of labour as to impede its advancement. The prudent portion of the workmen have saved means, and are now in a condition to extend their business and to his assistance, if they could procure it; but they cannot venture to undertake works in the existing scarcity of workmen, and the consequent high rate of wages.

In their resolution upon this memoir the Council state, —

That the Council is unanimously of opinion that there is an urgent and immediate necessity for procuring a supply of labour.

I may add that the very latest accounts from Western Australia which have reached this country declare that an additional supply of labour is essentially required to promote the advancement of that settlement.

For my own part, I can perceive no reason to expect any check to the prosperity of our Australian colonies (and the same observation applies, also, to the Cape of Good Hope) until they supply very nearly the whole amount of wool which is imported into this country. Now, I find that, during the year 1839, the amount of wool imported into Great Britain, from all parts of the world, was 57,395,944 lbs., of which quantity there was received from the Australian settlements 10,128,874 lbs. If we may judge of the future by the past, it is not too sanguine an expectation to believe that our colonies will be able to give us the

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whole supply required; for we find that the production of wool in Australia has increased with incredible rapidity within a very short period. The wool imported during the year 1824, from New South Wales, amounted to only 275,560 lbs.; whereas, in 1890, it was not less than 6,621,291 lbs. In proportion to the increased growth of wool, must be the increased demand for labour; and one gentleman who was examined, in New South Wales, computes that the present increase of the flocks and herds of that colony requires an additional supply, yearly, of not less than 3500 shepherds alone. Passing to the Cape of Good Hope, we find that, though there has been much mismanagement in that colony, there is yet a growing demand for labour, there. As I prefer, as much as possible, to rest my argument rather upon official documents than upon newspaper statements, I shall confine my quotations, with respect to the demand for labour at the Cape, to an extract from a paper which was presented to Parliament a few days since. It is a Report from the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope respecting the treatment of the apprentices sent out by the "Children's Friend Society." Major Longmore, one of the commissioners appointed to inquire into their treatment, says, in speaking of the demand for labour in the colony, —

The demand for domestic and farm servants, mechanics, and even common labourers, being very great and urgent in the colony (more especially since the emancipation of the negro apprentices), and likely to continue so for many years, this scarcity presents a certain prospect to the apprentices and working classes of every description, whether artisan or labourer, of being able to obtain a comfortable livelihood and maintenance, where good character exists, and ordinary exertion and prudence accompany that good conduct. . . . The average rate of wages for domestic servants is from 1*l.* to 2*l.* 5*s.* per month; that of farm servants, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per day; whilst skillful artisans may and do earn from 3*s.* to 5*s.* per day; and, from the circumstance of the supply of labour being far less than the demand, the facilities to Europeans, of industrious and temperate habits, of improving their condition, are very great.

British America next claims our attention. Here we find that emigration has been much checked, during the last three years, by the Canadian insurrection. The alarm, however, which deterred emigrants from proceeding to America, has now subsided; and though Government has, as yet, done nothing to encourage emigration to Canada, nowhere is its value more sensibly felt. I might quote the speeches and despatches of successive Governors— of Sir John Colborne, Sir Francis Head,

Sir George Arthur, and Lord Durham — to show how strongly they have felt the vital importance of emigration, to the improvement and safety of the Canadas. During the last session of the Legislature of Upper Canada, the House of Assembly agreed to a special address to the Crown upon the subject of emigration, which dwells at large upon the advantages which would arise from its encouragement. As this address is too long to allow of my reading it to the House, I shall content myself with selecting, as evidence of the interest with which this question is viewed by the Legislature of Upper Canada, an extract from the very last address adopted by the House of Assembly previous to its final dissolution: —

We would respectfully suggest to your Majesty the paramount subject of emigration from the British Isles, which we consider the best calculated to render the united province British in fact as well as in name. No time, in our humble opinion, should be lost, in the establishment and vigorous prosecution of a well-organised system of emigration, calculated to afford every possible facility to the settlement of that extensive domain, the proceeds of which have been proposed to be surrendered to the control of the provincial Legislature, upon certain terms and conditions, which, in Upper and Lower Canada, is, at present, in right of the Crown, at your Majesty's disposal.

I cannot present to the House a more satisfactory illustration of the improvement which has taken place in the condition of the labouring classes who have emigrated to Upper Canada than by stating the general recapitulation of a statistical return, with respect to the condition of certain settlers in Upper Canada, which has been placed in my hands by the governor of the Canada Company. This company allows the purchasers of its lands to pay for them by five instalments, and, with a view to ascertain the solvency of those whose instalments are in arrear, they directed their agents to send home a statement of the exact condition of each of these settlers. I hold in my hand the return relating to the district of Guelph. The name of each settler is given, as well as all the particulars respecting his condition. The general summary which this return presents is as follows:—Out of 156 settlers, to whom the report relates, it appears that 129 had no capital whatever upon their arrival in Canada, beyond the labour of their arms and the clothing which they carried with them. These 129 families consist of 436 persons. They are now in possession of 100 houses; they have cleared 2820 acres; they possess 438 head of cattle, 41 sheep, 9 horses, and the aggregate value of their property was found, in the spring of 1840, to be

22,658*l.*, giving an average of little short of 200*l.* to each family. Now, it is to be remembered that this report presents the least favourable view of Canadian emigration, because no account has been taken of the property of those who have regularly paid their instalments to the company; and it may therefore be inferred that if such be the condition of those who are in arrear, much more satisfactory must be the state of those settlers who have been able regularly to discharge their liabilities to the company. In reply to an inquiry addressed by me to the secretary of the Canada Company, with respect to the number of labourers who would find employment on the company's lands during the present year, the secretary writes to the following effect:—

I feel some difficulty in stating the precise number of emigrants who might probably find employment in the company's lands, in the Huron tract, or in other parts of the province, this season. I feel confident that many thousands might readily find such employment. The opinion I have heard from Upper Canada is, that nothing is so much required to promote the prosperity of that country as an abundant supply of labour.

He adds, —

The current wages in the company's lands vary from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 7*s.* 6*d.* per day, and frequently board and lodging in addition.

The most recent instance of emigration to Upper Canada of which we have an official account, fully confirms these statements. Colonel Wyndham sent out, from the county of Clare, during the last summer, 181 emigrants. They were placed under the superintendance of Lieutenant Rubridge, — a gentleman of much experience in Canadian colonisation, — who accompanied them as far as Cobourg, in Upper Canada. They had not been there more than three days when the whole party were engaged, — the men at 2*l.* 10*s.* per month, with board and lodging, the women at 1*l.* The official account states, that there were applications, in that district alone, for four times the number actually carried out. I have, now, only to detain the House with one more quotation respecting the demand for labour in British America. It is from Sir John Harvey's address to the Legislature of New Brunswick, upon opening the last session in that province. Speaking in reference to some proposals which had been made to the Government by a land company, he says, —

The high price of labour, owing to the insufficiency of its labouring population, which prevails throughout the province, is confessedly cramping the enterprise and exertions, and otherwise operating most injuriously upon its com-

mercial and agricultural interests; and this consideration would, alone, appear to me to offer sufficient inducement for entertaining a proposition which I understand to go to the extent of insuring a regular and adequate supply of that valuable class of our fellow-subjects to whom encouragement and assistance is proposed to be given, to enable them, whensoever inclined, to settle upon lands of good quality.

Having now shown that the labouring population of the United Kingdom are frequently exposed to extreme privations, from inability to procure employment, and that the prosperity of many of our colonies is, at the same time, much retarded by the want of an adequate supply of labour, for which they are able to offer a much more satisfactory remuneration than the labourer can obtain in this country, — I am entitled to assume that my case is established; for it appears to me an irresistible inference, that, under such circumstances, it is the duty of the State to come to the aid of the necessities of both the mother country and of the colonies, by supplying the deficiency in the labour market of the one by removing the excess which prevails in the other, and thus converting the involuntary idler into an active and prosperous colonist. Fortunately, we have no longer to contend with those prejudices against emigration which formerly prevailed, — prejudices not a little aggravated by the system of transportation which is soon about to cease. I cannot allude to this subject without offering the humble meed of my thanks to the Honourable Baronet the Member for Leeds, and to the Archbishop of Dublin, for the exertions which they have made to remove from our rising colonies in Australia the contamination which has been inflicted upon them by the system of transportation, and which has tended to deter from settlement in them all who value the morality of the social circle by which they are surrounded. The best proof I can give of the disposition which prevails amongst the population of the United Kingdom to emigrate is, to remind the House that, in one year (1832), above 100,000 persons emigrated from the United Kingdom; and, during the last fourteen years, not less than 790,398 persons have left this country in quest of a new home; of whom 348,117 have gone to the United States. Without mingling with the remark a single particle of jealousy towards the United States, I may observe, that the greater portion of this large band of emigrants would have directed their steps to our own colonies rather than to the United States, if due measures had been taken to direct to them the stream of British colonisation.

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We shall, probably, be told, in reference to this statement, that this immense amount of voluntary and unaided emigration clearly shows that it is unnecessary for the State to intervene with any assistance. The answer is obvious: those by whom emigration is most needed are now unable to carry their labour to our colonies without the assistance of the State. To convey an Irish labourer to Canada, with his wife and two children, would cost about 15*l.*, exclusive of provisions; and it is needless to remark, that a man who scarcely possesses enough to procure for him his daily food finds it impossible to command such a sum. It is said, also, that if emigration were undertaken by the Government, voluntary emigration would be thereby checked and impeded. This appears to me to be a pure assumption, wholly unfounded in reason. There is no doubt that many would, under such circumstances, endeavour to procure a free passage, who are able to pay for it; but if they were to fail in obtaining such a free passage (and I presume that proper precautions would be taken to defeat such endeavours), I cannot perceive how either the disposition or the ability to emigrate, by which they would have been otherwise animated, can be thereby diminished. Others, again, complain that an extensive system of colonisation carries away the capital and labour of the mother country, which might be more beneficially employed at home. Now, with respect to the transfer of capital, it is to be observed that the amount of capital required to carry on colonisation is very inconsiderable, and that the greater part of it is expended in giving employment to our shipping,—a department of our mercantile industry which it ought always to be the especial policy of Great Britain to cherish and support. Wealth is produced in the colonies, not by large investments of capital removed from employments at home, but by the labour of the emigrant upon the virgin soil of a fruitful territory. But, even if it were true that national colonisation would absorb a large portion of the surplus capital of the mother country, it does not necessarily follow that any injury would be thereby occasioned, because we know that it is impossible to retain capital at home if it can obtain more profitable investment abroad; and it is surely better that it should be employed in adding to the strength and prosperity of the empire, by the creation of new dependencies, than in hazardous loans to foreign countries. The President of the United States, in his last opening address to Con-

gress, estimates the amount due by the different states of the Union to foreign creditors, for which the public faith is pledged, at not less than 200,000,000 dollars, or above 40,000,000*l.* sterling. A large portion of this debt is due to English creditors; and I am entitled to contend that this portion of the surplus capital of Great Britain might have been at least as advantageously employed in giving birth to new settlements within the limits of our own empire. As to the objection, frequently urged in Ireland, that the labour of her population might be much more usefully employed at home,—that our waste lands should be reclaimed,—that public works, on a large scale, should be undertaken,—and that the land already under cultivation should be improved by an increased application of labour, before emigration should be encouraged by the State,—I can only say, that no one feels more strongly than I do the advantage which would arise from directing to these objects the industry of our unemployed population. I have frequently solicited the Government to give every encouragement within the scope of legislation to the reclamation of our waste lands, and even to undertake their cultivation, to a certain extent, by way of experiment and example. If earnest entreaties could have induced Parliament to establish a general system of railways, and to promote other useful public works in Ireland, they would now be in progress. But even if these things were done, still vast numbers of our teeming population would remain inadequately provided for. As for the application of private capital to the improvement of land, I admit that it is most desirable, and that it would be attended with equal profit to the capitalist and advantage to the labourer; but to wait for it whilst the people are starving, is to stand like the rustic, gazing on the river,—

— Expectat dum deficit annis, at ille
 Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.

Another objection with which we have to contend is, that the *vacuum* created by emigration would be immediately filled by the natural increase of population. Now, without dwelling upon the observation, that there is no reason why the stream of colonisation should not be continuous, it is to be remarked that my argument in favour of emigration has assumed that there is, at present, an excess of population in the United Kingdom; and to remove an excess is not the same thing as to create a *vacuum*. But it is not, even theoretically, true, that the *vacuum* created by the annual removal of a given number

of the population would, of necessity, be speedily filled. The correctness of this position depends entirely upon the age of the persons who emigrate. The present annual increase of the population of Great Britain and Ireland is about 370,000 individuals. Now, if this number of new-born infants were annually removed, the population, *ceteris paribus*, would remain stationary. But, inasmuch as only 250,000 persons, of each sex, arrive, annually, at the age of eighteen, it is obvious that, if, out of the 500,000 persons thus annually arriving at the marriageable age, so large a number as 370,000 were to be annually removed to the colonies, the mother country would be speedily depopulated; because the remaining portion of those who arrive at maturity would not be sufficient to keep up the present number of the population. These are, I believe, the principal objections which are usually urged against the principle of colonisation; and those who employ them generally conclude by a touching appeal to the patriotism of the poor, forbidding them to violate, by emigrating, the attachment which they owe to their country. Assuredly, there is no sentiment of the human breast more truly estimable than the love of one's country; but when we find that the wealthier classes of society, to which those who speak this language belong, willingly consign their own children to an exile of thirty years' duration in India, — if, by doing so, they can make a satisfactory provision for them, — it seems almost as if we were mocking the sensibilities of the poor when we tell them that they ought rather to perish in wretched indigence at home than to live in comfort and independence in the colonies. No, Sir, instead of circumscribing their patriotism within the limits of a parish or a province, we ought rather to teach them to indulge the more expansive nationality of regarding every portion of the British empire as the home of the enterprising and the free.

Assuming, now, that I have convinced the House that colonisation ought to be undertaken by the State on a scale commensurate with the wants of our colonies, as well as of our own labouring population, I next proceed briefly to review what has been already accomplished towards the advancement of this object, and to point out what still remains to be done. The question of emigration was, in our times, first brought prominently forward by Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, who deserves much credit for having forced it into consideration at a time when the public feeling was de-

cidely adverse to its discussion. At his instance, the parliamentary Committees of 1827 and 1828 were appointed. They recommended, in their Report, that an advance should be made, by way of loan, on annuity, for the purpose of settling a portion of the surplus labourers of the United Kingdom upon the unpeopled lands of Canada. Under the system recommended by these Committees, the labourer would have been placed in occupation of a house and of a hundred acres of land, and would have been expected to repay all the expenses attending his location, by an annuity which was to continue payable for sixty years. Throughout all his publications, as well as in these Reports, Sir Robert Wilmot Horton refers, with great pride, to the success of the Irish emigrants who were located in Canada, at the public expense, during the years 1823 and 1825. As this experiment is of much importance in its bearings upon the general question of emigration, I may be allowed to mention its details. In 1823, 568 emigrants, of the poorest class, were sent out from Ireland, and located in Upper Canada at an expense of 12,593*l.*; and, in 1825, 2024 persons were in like manner sent out and located, at an expense of 49,145*l.* It will be perceived that the expense amounted to about 22*l.* per head; but, in the case of these settlers, no repayment whatever has been required. I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of quoting an extract from a published letter from Chief Justice Robinson to Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, descriptive of their present condition. It was written during the year 1839: —

You may be assured that you have not expressed yourself too strongly respecting the favourable change in the condition of the poor Irish who were taken to Upper Canada in 1823 and 1825, in consequence of your benevolent exertions. . . . You would find the former tenant of a wretched hovel, without object in life, and almost without power to do anything but mischief, become the absolute proprietor of a hundred acres of land, paying no rent, and, it may almost be said, with truth, paying no taxes.

There is much more to the same effect, enlarging upon the happy change which has taken place in their condition, and the gratitude which they feel towards the British Government for having enabled them to obtain it. Sir R. W. Horton has recently promulgated the same views as those embodied in the Reports of the parliamentary Committees over which he presided. He now recommends that one million of persons should be removed from Ireland and located in Canada, at an expense of 12,000,000*l.*, or 60*l.* for each

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family. He proposes that this sum should be raised, on an annuity of 537,400*l.*, continuing for forty years; that, during the first seven years, the annuity, which would be 2*l.* 13*s.* 9*d.* for each 60*l.*, should be paid by the landlords from whose estates these poor persons are removed, and, during the remaining thirty-three years, by the settlers themselves; after which time, they would possess their land in fee, disencumbered from all rent. With regard to this plan of emigration, I am so confident in the success of almost any undertaking in the way of colonisation, that it is with reluctance that I would suggest a doubt as to its expediency. Indeed, as regards arrangements between landlords and their small tenants, it is probable that some such plan might be attended with advantage to both, if undertaken under the auspices of the Government. Though no one can depreciate more strongly than I do the prevailing system of ejectment for the clearance of Irish estates, I believe, at the same time, that where land has become very much subdivided, it would equally conduce to the benefit of both landlord and tenant, that a portion of the superabundant population should be enabled to emigrate; and, in such cases, it seems to me perfectly fair that the landlord should be called upon to co-operate with the state in defraying the expenses of emigration. But as the motion before the House more peculiarly applies to the class of labourers, rather than to that of small farmers, I am compelled to say that I do not think the proposal of Sir R. W. Horton would be found applicable to their emigration. The mode of colonisation which he proposes is about four times more expensive than that which limits the interference of the State to the simple conveyance of labour to those colonies, in which it finds immediate employment; and although the Irish and Scotch landlords might be willing to contribute to a considerable extent towards the location in Canada of their small farmers, in consideration of the benefit thereby resulting to their estates, I feel persuaded that they would not be found willing, except, perhaps, in a very few cases, to make such contribution as Sir R. W. Horton proposes, towards the location of the mere labourers, in whose removal to the colonies they have only an indirect and incidental interest. Neither, as regards the well-being of the labourer himself, is this scheme of emigration equally eligible with the plan of simple conveyance to the colony. Being wholly unaccustomed to the system of Canadian farming, he would

be exposed to many difficulties, when first placed in possession of his land, which a short preparatory residence as a labourer in Canada would obviate. Experience has also shown that there is the greatest difficulty in obtaining repayment of the expense of effecting these locations, in those cases in which, as was done by the New Brunswick Land Company, an attempt has been made, by artificial means, at once to convert the labourer into a landholder. As soon as he finds himself burdened with a heavy debt, he becomes exposed to the temptation of exhausting his land to the utmost, and of then escaping from his liabilities, by passing over to the United States. Even with a view to the interest of the settler himself, it is much better that those who have no capital should commence their career in America as labourers; and if they are possessed of ordinary prudence, they soon find themselves enabled to purchase land, which may be obtained at the rate of from 5*s.* to 15*s.* per acre, when they have acquired, by a short residence in the colony, both experience and capital sufficient to enable them to cultivate it to the greatest advantage. I have only to add, in reference to this proposal, that it did not find acceptance with the public or with Parliament, and, accordingly, it has not been acted upon.

One of the measures recommended by the Committee of 1828 was, that parishes in England should be enabled to raise money, by way of poor rate, for the purpose of assisting the poor to emigrate. This suggestion has been carried into effect, a clause embodying this point having been inserted in the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834. It has been acted upon, to a limited extent. In 1836, as many as 4600 persons were enabled to emigrate from different parishes in England to Canada, by the aid of the poor rate. The beneficial operation of this Act has, however, been much impaired by the absence of any organisation, in Canada, for conducting the emigrants, on their arrival, to those parts of the colony in which there is an active demand for labour. It is not surprising that, when 20,000 or 30,000 labouring emigrants land at Quebec in the course of a few months, the surrounding district should be found unable to absorb so large a supply of labour; and though even a greater number would easily obtain employment if they were distributed through the more distant parts of those extensive regions, yet the influx into one sea-port of so great a number of persons unprovided with the means of going into the interior, and wanting the

direction of adequate superintendence, often occasions great temporary suffering among the emigrants, and tends to create an unfounded impression at home with respect to the difficulties attending emigration to the Canadas. A clause was also introduced into the Irish Poor Law, to enable parishes to contribute a portion of their poor rates, to enable their poor to emigrate. It was, however, so framed as to render it extremely difficult to be brought into practical operation. It requires that, before any advance can be made out of the poor rate for the purposes of emigration, the consent of the ratepayers of the district shall be first obtained. Now, the reference of any question whatever to the general body of the ratepayers, rather than to the guardians, must always be attended with considerable inconvenience, on account of the difficulty of ascertaining the opinion of large bodies of persons; but in the case of emigration especially, it is to be feared that the farmers, who have an interest in keeping the wages of labour as low as possible, will not be much disposed to encourage and facilitate the distressed labourers to emigrate. On the part, also, of the holders of property at large in Ireland, who have recently consented to take upon themselves the payment of rates for the relief of the poor, to an extent which will probably exceed 500,000*l.* per annum, there will naturally be considerable reluctance, except under the fear of being burdened with the maintenance of the unemployed labourers in the workhouse, to subject themselves to additional taxation for the advancement of an object such as emigration, which they will justly regard as one of national, rather than of merely local, concern.

I now come to what appears to me the great era in the history of modern colonisation, — I mean, the promulgation of the Wakefield principle of self-supporting emigration. In the year 1830, Mr. Wakefield published a pamphlet, in which were set forth new views upon the subject of colonisation. In this work, he clearly showed that the mode of founding colonies which had so long prevailed, — and of which, the case of the Swan River settlement afforded the most recent and most striking instance, — by conferring upon individuals gratuitous grants of land to an enormous extent, tended to create and perpetuate evils which have the effect of greatly retarding the advancement of their prosperity. He showed that this unlimited facility of acquiring large tracts of wild land induced persons to appropriate to themselves more land than they

could possibly improve and settle; — that it caused large unreclaimed blocks of territory to be interspersed between the settlers, thereby intercepting their communication, and preventing that mutual co-operation, without which each individual becomes comparatively helpless; — that it induced the poorer emigrants to become proprietors of land before they possessed capital to cultivate it; whilst, at the same time, it deprived the capitalist — (as was remarkably the case with Mr. Peel, who obtained an immense grant of territory, and took out a large body of settlers to the Swan River) — of the means of obtaining the labour necessary to render his territorial acquisitions valuable to himself and others. In order to correct the evils arising from the dispersion of settlers, occasioned by this pernicious system, Mr. Wakefield suggested, that, in future, all land in the colonies belonging to the Crown should be sold at a fixed *minimum* price, and that the proceeds arising from its sale should be applied to the conveyance of emigrants to the district in which the land was sold. He argued, that, by adopting this simple principle, a proper ratio between capital and labour would be secured; that all favouritism in the disposal of land would be prevented; that none would pay for land who did not intend to cultivate or bring it under settlement; that the money paid for such land would, in fact, be employed by the State for the immediate benefit of the purchaser, inasmuch as it would be applied to obtain for him a supply of labour, without which his territorial acquisitions would remain valueless; that the condition of the labourer would also be improved, because, instead of possessing land, useless to him without capital, he would obtain regular wages, until he should be enabled, out of his earnings, to apply capital to the purchase and improvement of land; and that, as each additional emigrant would, after a short time, be enabled to make such purchases, the funds applicable to emigration would increase by a regular and constant process of accumulation. These views recommended themselves so strongly to the favourable judgment of the public, that they were not long in finding active supporters. A society, denominated "The National Colonisation Society," — of which my Honourable Friend the Member for Hull, who has done so much for colonisation, and myself, were members, — was formed almost immediately after the appearance of Mr. Wakefield's pamphlet, for the purpose of forwarding and giving practical effect to

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the principles which it contained. These principles were afterwards so far adopted by the Government, that, in the year 1831, Lord Goderich sent out circular instructions to all the colonies, directing that, in future, the Crown lands should no longer be granted gratuitously, but should be sold. The Government refused, however, at the same time, to attempt the full development of Mr. Wakefield's principle, by applying, in all cases, the proceeds arising from the sale of lands in the colonies to the purposes of emigration. It has been since partially tried, and the result has fully justified the soundness of the principle upon which the proposal rested. As early as the year 1836, the sale of unappropriated lands in the colony of New South Wales produced, in that year, the sum of 126,628*l*. The funds arising from this source have since been, in part, applied in aid of emigration to that colony, but a large proportion of them has been diverted to other purposes. So much benefit has resulted from the immigration thus created, and so highly is that benefit appreciated, that, at this moment, the greatest possible discontent prevails in New South Wales, on account of the application of the land fund to other purposes than emigration. This departure from a plan of colonisation so acceptable to the colony from which these funds are derived, founded upon such sound principles, and in some measure guaranteed by the Minister for the Colonies, in a despatch to the Governor of New South Wales, admits of the less justification when it is remembered that the exclusive appropriation of the land fund to the encouragement of emigration was strongly recommended by a Select Committee of this House, over which my Honourable Friend the Member for Sheffield — who has been so able and efficient a supporter of this system of colonisation — presided, in the year 1836. Nor can the House forget the strong impression created in support of this principle by the powerful speech of the Honourable Member for Sheffield, during the last Session, and by the debate which ensued. The merits of this system have, in the mean time, been fully tested in the case of South Australia, and have been there attended with the most perfect success. That colony was founded upon the express engagement, guaranteed by legislative enactment, that the proceeds arising from the sale of land should be strictly applied to labour emigration. The best proof I can adduce of the successful application of the Wakefield principle to this settlement is the fact that, though

four years have scarcely elapsed since its foundation, more than 250,000*l*. has already been realised from the sale of land; which amount has either been already applied, or now remains applicable to the conveyance of emigrants. Never, indeed, was a colony established in which public opinion has manifested so much confidence.

I have here to notice the most recent proceedings, on the part of the Government, with regard to emigration. The South Australian Commission, consisting of an unpaid body of independent gentlemen, by whom that colony was founded, have been displaced, and their functions have been transferred to a Board of Land and Emigration, consisting of three paid Government Commissioners. With this proceeding I am not disposed to find fault; because, as a general principle, I prefer paid to unpaid services, and because I am of opinion that a board was much required for the purpose of exercising a general superintendence over emigration to all our colonies. I cannot, indeed, wholly refrain from misgivings as to its efficiency, when I remember that, if it had rested with the Colonial Office alone, to establish the colony of South Australia, that flourishing settlement would never have been founded; and when I perceive that, although the Noble Lord (Lord John Russell) has recently avowed himself a convert to that system of which Mr. Wakefield was not only, as the Noble Lord designates him, the advocate, but the originator, he yet hesitates to apply it, in all its integrity, to New South Wales and our other colonies. In reference to this subject, I feel that it is only an act of justice to an individual who has, in my opinion, conferred a great benefit upon the empire at large, to express my regret that Mr. Wakefield has not been employed by the Government to aid in the practical development of those enlarged views of colonisation of which he has been recognised by the Noble Lord, in this House, as the ablest supporter. I make this remark, without any regard to personal considerations, for I have but a very slight acquaintance with him; but I feel it my duty to notice it, as a matter in which the public interest and the extension of our colonial empire are concerned.

I confess, too, that I should be disposed to augur badly of the spirit by which the Colonial Office is animated, in regard to emigration, if I were to judge it by its proceedings in reference to New Zealand. Look at the history of those proceedings. In the year 1838, certain benevolent and public-spirited individuals, struck with the fertility and resources of New Zealand,

determined to undertake the foundation of a British colony in those fine islands, upon the same principle that had been found so successful in South Australia. When they applied to Parliament for its sanction to the undertaking, they were told by the Government that this sanction would be withheld unless the gentlemen interested in the proposal of the measure should from themselves into a land company, the directors of which would have a pecuniary interest in the settlement. Accordingly, in compliance with this suggestion, and a company was formed in the year 1839; but, instead of meeting with that assistance and encouragement which they were entitled to expect from the Colonial Office, every obstruction has been thrown in the way of their noble enterprise. The course taken by the Government, with regard to this project, is perfectly inexplicable; and any one who reads the correspondence relative to it, which has been recently laid before the House, would almost be tempted to say that the Government had taken that precise course which was best calculated to invite foreign powers to question our undoubted right to supremacy in those islands. I make this observation in no unkindly spirit, but with the view of exploring the Colonial Office to retrace its steps before it is too late. As the company have already sent out above 1000 settlers, and have acquired an immense territory, by purchase, from the natives, the Government will soon be compelled to form a deliberate decision, whether, or not, they will recognise New Zealand as a British colony, and undertake its government on their own responsibility. I trust that they will not hesitate to bring within the compass of British civilisation a country possessing so many advantages of every kind, in which, under proper arrangement, many thousands of our unemployed population would find profitable occupation for their industry, whilst, at the same time, they would enlarge and strengthen the boundaries of our empire.

Having now examined, in review, the successive efforts which have been made to extend emigration, I have only to point out what still remains to be accomplished. If I am asked what specific measure I am desirous that the Government should adopt, I answer, in one sentence, — provide a free passage for every industrious man, of good character, who cannot find adequate employment at home, to those colonies in which his labour, being much wanted, will be adequately rewarded, and by a removal to which his condition will be, in all respects, improved. If I am asked in what manner the funds necessary to conduct such an extensive emigration

shall be provided, I might reply that it is for the executive Government to consider in what manner those funds may best be obtained; and that, if Parliament be as strongly impressed as I believe it to be with the necessity of providing for the well-being of our surplus population, and for the prosperity of our colonial empire, the Government may confidently rely upon its disposition to support any financial measures which may be required for the promotion of these objects. But I will not hesitate to point out the sources from which it seems to me that the necessary funds may be derived, without imposing any burdensome sacrifices upon this country. Even if such sources, however, were not available, considerations of expense ought not, in my opinion, to deter us from undertaking colonisation. For my own part, I should not regard a loan of ten or twelve millions sterling, applied at the rate of a million a-year, to emigration, as an improvident application of the capital and resources of the mother country. Neither should I object, if other means were not available, to an apportionment of the expenses of emigration between the colony, the public at large, and the local district relieved by emigration; inasmuch as the benefit would be shared by each of these three contributing parties. But it is not necessary to have recourse to either of these expedients for raising the funds necessary to carry into effect the emigration recommended in the resolutions now before the House. We have only to avail ourselves of the principles already partially tried, — where tried found successful, — and fully sustained by the approbation of public opinion, both at home and in the colonies. The waste lands which still remain ungranted in the colonies may justly be regarded as held in trust by the Crown for the common benefit of the whole British people. If the proceeds arising from the sale of this land were henceforth to be strictly applied to emigration, it would be difficult to assign limits to the amount which might be derived from this source. In a single year (1836), there was received from the sale of land in the United States no less a sum than 25,000,000 dollars, or above 5,000,000*l.* sterling; and as Great Britain possesses an extent of land in her colonies which may almost be designated as unbounded, it is not too much to suppose that, under the operation of the self-supporting principle of colonisation, the funds derived from the sale of land would augment with a rapidity which we dare not, at present, calculate. For my own part, judging by the receipts which have already been derived from this source, I am fully

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persuaded that, if the Government had espoused this principle in 1830, when it was first proposed, and had faithfully adhered to it, they would have had, at this moment, an annually augmenting revenue from our colonies, applicable to emigration, of not less than 500,000*l.* per annum. Let them begin, then, by acceding to the wishes of the people of New South Wales and of the other Australian settlements, by giving a strict guarantee that the land fund shall not be diverted from emigration, and, if necessary, by raising a loan, upon this security, to meet the present intense demand for labour in these settlements. Let them take possession of such land in New Zealand as shall be voluntarily ceded by the chiefs, and put an end to the scramble for it which is now going on among private individuals,—undertaking, at the same time, the colonisation of those islands, and the civilisation of its natives. Let them give to the Cape of Good Hope a supply of labour adequate to its wants,—raising, if necessary, a loan for that purpose, upon the security of its land revenue. With respect to British America, the course of proceeding is somewhat more complex; because the Crown, having surrendered to the control of the provincial Legislatures its territorial revenue, their consent becomes necessary to any measure by which its appropriation may be effected. But, from the language which is held in reference to emigration, in all documents proceeding from the British inhabitants of America, there is every reason to expect that they will not only willingly, but gladly, co-operate with the Government in applying to the introduction of emigrants the land revenues now placed at their disposal. It is true that, in the Canadas, a large portion of the public land has been already granted to individuals; but, upon the whole, the land belonging to the Crown which still remains unsold in British America has been estimated to be worth 7,500,000*l.* There is, at this moment, a sum of 60,000*l.* due by the Canada Company to the Crown, which could not be applied in a manner more satisfactory to all the parties interested than in compliance with the request of that company, by appropriating it to purposes connected with emigration. A sum of about 40,000*l.*, due by the British American Land Company in Lower Canada, might also, with advantage, be applied in a similar manner. But if any difficulty should arise in obtaining funds for the promotion of emigration to Canada, in consequence of the limited extent of Crown domain now available for sale in that colony, the Government cannot meet that difficulty in a manner better calcu-

lated to promote the interests of Canada, than by recommending for adoption by the provincial Legislature the suggestions contained in the Appendix to Lord Durham's Report, in a very valuable paper which bears the signature of Mr. Charles Buller, but the authorship of which has, I believe, been assigned by him to Mr. Wakefield.

I allude, now, particularly to that portion of the Report, in Appendix B, which recommends a tax upon wild lands in British America, for the purpose of raising a fund to carry on public works and emigration. Those who are acquainted with the circumstances of Canada are aware that the improvement of that colony has been greatly obstructed by the interposition between the settlers of large tracts of land, which have been acquired by individuals at the time when the profuse and indiscriminate system of land-granting prevailed, and which are left by these proprietors in their original uncultivated state. A tax upon wild lands—payable either in land or money—will have the effect of compelling such proprietors either to sell or surrender a portion of these lands for the payment of the tax, or to take such measures for clearing, improving, and settling them, as will render the charge of a moderate land tax wholly inconsiderable. Such an assessment would, in fact, confer upon the landed proprietors of Canada the most valuable boon which they could receive, if the fund raised by this means be strictly applied, within the district on which it is to be levied, to the purposes designed. It is, indeed, so regarded by all the most intelligent owners of land in British America, who feel that the imposition of such a tax, applied to public improvements, would only be to require each proprietor to contribute to a common fund for the benefit of all, to be appropriated to objects essentially requisite to give a value to their lands, which, whilst they continue in a state of nature, are only nominal and unprofitable possessions. To the industrious settler, on the other hand, a moderate tax upon wild lands would afford substantial relief, if accompanied, as it ought to be, with the abolition of the obnoxious duty of statute labour. Captain Pringle, in a paper recently presented to the House, computes that the settler who owns fifty acres of land in Upper Canada, of which he has cleared thirty, now pays, in local taxation (assigning its proper value to the statute labour to which he is liable), not less than 1*l.* 5*s.* 1*d.*; whilst the great proprietor pays for the same extent of land, in an unclaimed state, an annual charge of only 1*s.* 4½*d.* It has been estimated

that a tax of only twopence per acre upon wild lands, in British America would produce a net revenue of upwards of 150,000*l.* per annum. Here, then, is a fund susceptible of constant augmentation, upon which advances might be made by the Treasury, by way of loan, repayable by instalment, in the same manner as advances are now made upon the security of rates and tolls, to the extent of several millions, by the Exchequer Bill Commissioners and by the Irish Board of Public Works, to the counties and local trustees of England and Ireland. There is no subject with respect to which the feeling of the British population in America is so unanimous as with regard to the urgent necessity of undertaking public works on an extended scale; and, inasmuch as, in those colonies where almost every man is in possession of land belonging to himself, public works cannot be extensively undertaken without obtaining a supply of labour from external sources, there can be no doubt that the inhabitants of the Canadas would willingly consent to the application of a portion of the funds raised upon the security of the wild land tax, to the acquisition of such a supply, by emigration from this country. It is possible, indeed, that, as has been the case in Australia, they may be found unwilling to pay the expense of conveying to the colony the children and aged persons belonging to the families of the youthful labourers whose industry they require; and, in such case, it is not unreasonable that, either by way of local contribution, or by assistance on the part of the State, or by the combined action of both these means, the young and the aged of our unemployed population should be enabled to accompany the more vigorous portion of their families to their new destination.

There is one objection to the encouragement of emigration to British America at the expense of the State, which deserves to be considered, because it undoubtedly possesses some validity. This is the apprehension that the emigrants carried out at the public expense will pass over to the United States; so that the cost of their conveyance will fall upon Great Britain, whilst the benefit of their industry would be obtained by another nation. It seems to me that this danger has been overrated. If the number who have gone from our colonies to the United States had been as great as is supposed by some writers, the population of the Canadas could not have reached its present amount. Under a well-regulated system of emigration, there is little reason to apprehend that such removal would take place to any considerable extent.

The climate of Canada is better than that of the United States, its soil as good, taxation is lighter, and the British emigrant enjoys, there, the advantage of living under those institutions to which he is accustomed and attached. If the same British capital which now finds investment in public works in the United States, were encouraged to seek employment in Canada, the remuneration of labour would be higher in our own colony than at the other side of the border; and if the emigrant labourer, instead of being thrown unaided and forlorn into the sea-ports of Lower Canada, from which he is frequently allured by misrepresentation into the United States, were conducted to those parts of British America where he would find certain and immediate employment, he would seldom be disposed to exchange the certain advantage thus secured to him for the chances of an adventure into the United States. Much might be done, also, to prevent such a result, by an improved administration of the land department of the colonies. There is abundant evidence to show that many persons who have gone out with the intention of settling in the Canadas, have been driven to the United States by the delay arising from the imperfection of surveys, and the difficulty of acquiring titles in the land department of our colonies. This source of injury may be easily obviated by greater energy in the local administration. Many, too, have been driven away by finding that the interposition of large blocks of wild land, as "clergy reserves," between the different settlements, has prevented those improvements from taking place which would have rendered all property in the neighbourhood more valuable. It is true, indeed, that, to the extent of one fourth of their whole amount, legislative permission was obtained, in 1827, to sell these clergy reserves; but, in Lower Canada, — rather more than one fourth having been already disposed of, — all further sale is now arrested. It is necessary, therefore, in order to remove this source of complaint, that power should be given to bring the remainder of these reserves into the market whenever the interest of any district requires their sale. In reference to the systematic conduct of emigration to British America, it is of great importance that a local agency should be established, for the purpose of ascertaining, during the winter season, the supply of labourers that will be required by each district; so that emigrants, when they arrive, in the summer, may be directed to those localities in which they will be sure of obtaining employment. Official Reports relative to the probable demand

for labour in each district, in the different provinces of British America, ought to be sent over and circulated in this country as early as possible in the spring, so that if anything should have occurred to diminish the demand for labour in any particular quarter, it might be made known in time to prevent the disappointment of false hopes, on the part of the emigrant.

In closing this statement, I have only to advert to one additional point, to which I am disposed to attach considerable importance. We hear so much of the spiritual destitution which prevails in our colonies, that it becomes a matter of public concern, in founding a system of colonisation under the auspices of the State, to make provision for the religious instruction of those who emigrate. It seems to me, therefore, that wherever a considerable body of persons belonging to any particular religious persuasion emigrate to any colony, a sufficient number of clergymen of the same persuasion should be encouraged to accompany them, by the grant of a free passage, and by the assignment to them of a small permanent endowment in the colony. I have reason to think that the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland would view emigration with much more favour than they do at present, if some such arrangement were made for the religious superintendence of the numerous emigrants belonging to that persuasion; and, indeed, it is a feeling which must be shared by every conscientious minister of every persuasion.

I have now gone through, at more length than I could have desired, the various topics to which I have thought it my duty to allude, in connection with the subject which I have undertaken to submit to the consideration of the House. It will be perceived that I have proposed no new scheme, — that I have suggested no untried experiment, — but that I have limited myself to an earnest solicitation, that plans proposed by others, and partially adopted, may, without delay, be carried into full and practical effect. I rest my appeal to the House upon the simple consideration that it is our duty, as guardians of the happiness of the people, not to allow our population to famish at home, whilst such abundant resources lie open to our command in other portions of the empire. I need not add, that I have brought forward this motion with no unfriendly feeling towards the Government, whom I believe to be not so much, themselves, disinclined to promote colonisation, as timid in regard to the reception of any proposal which they might

be disposed to submit to the country for its extension. One of the objects, therefore, which I have in view, in proposing the present resolutions, is, to give this House an opportunity of declaring that it will cheerfully afford its support to such a proposal, if made by the Government. I appeal, too, with some confidence, to the Noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, because I know that he possesses a mind to comprehend, and energy to execute, whatever is calculated to conduce to the public advantage. He has done much for his country, and for mankind; but I feel persuaded that he can couple his name with no act of greater utility, or to which he will look back with greater satisfaction, than to a measure which would cause the cry of hunger to be no more heard throughout the land. Nor can he acquire any prouder title to fame, than to have realised for his country and for his Sovereign the prediction which was addressed by our great poet to a former monarch of these realms:

Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,
Her honour and the greatness of her name shall
be,
And make new nations.

For myself, I advance no higher claim than to have been, in regard to this matter, the humble follower of abler men; and as it has always been a source of satisfaction to me to have been among the earliest supporters of that system of emigration which has already indicated the mighty results to which it may hereafter lead, so, also, do I now rejoice in the indulgence of an assured expectation, that, at no distant period, we shall witness the full accomplishment of a measure which will alike conduce to the aggrandisement of the empire, and the individual happiness of its population, — the establishment of a well-regulated system of national colonisation. I beg, now, to move the following resolutions: —

That, in Great Britain and Ireland, the working classes are frequently exposed to extreme privation, from inability to procure employment:

That, in several of the British colonies, the demand for labour is urgent, continuous, and increasing, and its remuneration is comparatively ample, whilst the prosperity of these colonies is much retarded by its inadequate supply:

That, under these circumstances, it is expedient that a free passage to those colonies which offer the greatest rewards to industry should be provided by the State for such of the labouring classes as are disposed to emigrate thither.

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